



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Food and Drug Administration
Rockville MD 20857

JUL - 2 1999

6548 '99 JUL -6 P1:41

The Honorable Julian C. Dixon
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-0532

Dear Mr. Dixon:

Thank you for your letter of June 16, 1999 on behalf of several of your constituents concerning actions by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA or the Agency) in regard to labeling of foods treated with ionizing radiation.

The 1997 FDA Modernization Act (PL 105-115) states that "[n]o provision . . . shall be construed to require on the label or labeling of a food a separate radiation disclosure statement that is more prominent than the declaration of ingredients" FDA published a final rule implementing this provision of the law in the Federal Register of August 17, 1998. A copy of this regulation, along with the pre-existing labeling requirements for food treated with ionizing radiation (21 CFR 179), are enclosed for your information.

In addition, the Statement of Managers accompanying the FDA Modernization Act directed FDA to publish for public comment further proposed changes to the Agency's current labeling regulations. The managers stated their intention that any required labeling be of a type and character such that it would not be perceived to be a warning or give rise to inappropriate consumer anxiety. On February 17, 1999, FDA published an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR) in the Federal Register soliciting public comment on whether additional revisions to the current irradiation labeling requirements are needed and, if so, what form such revisions might take. The deadline for comments in response to the ANPR has been extended to July 19, 1999.

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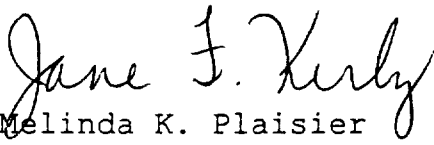
Page 2 - The Honorable Julian C. Dixon

We have forwarded your constituents' correspondence to the Docket for inclusion in the record. FDA's final approach to labeling of irradiated foods will take into account all of the data and information received.

Because your constituents may be concerned about irradiation labeling for meat and poultry, you may also wish to contact the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for information. (USDA has primary regulatory authority over meat and poultry products, including the labeling of such products.)

We have also enclosed some general background on the issue of irradiation. We trust this responds to your concerns.

Sincerely,


for Melinda K. Plaisier
Interim Associate Commissioner
for Legislative Affairs

Enclosures

cc: Dockets Management Branch
(98N-1038)

JULIAN C. DIXON
32ND DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

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PATRICIA MILLER
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

June 16, 1999

Dr. Jane E. Henney
Commissioner
Food and Drug Administration
5600 Fishers Ln.
Rockville, MD 20857

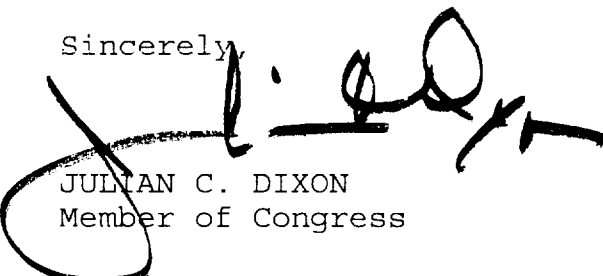
Dear Dr. Henney:

Several of my constituents have contacted my office to express their opposition to allowing labeling requirements of irradiated beef to expire. It is my understanding that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will soon make a decision on this matter.

I have enclosed an example of the type of letters I have received concerning this issue and would appreciate the FDA's response to the issues raised by my constituents.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,



JULIAN C. DIXON
Member of Congress

JCD:jg

Enclosure

No. 99-4204

Jul Dixon

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ACTION

May 13, 1999

The Honorable Julian Dixon
United States House of Representatives Room 2252
Raymond House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Dixon,

Enclosed is a letter I sent to the FDA concerning food irradiation.

I do not want to eat irradiation foods. Radiation not only destroys the "bad" things in our food; it also destroys the good. Food can sit on store shelves for days and days and still appear to be fresh; foods can be spoiled without the appearance of being spoiled. Vitamins are destroyed by radiation, food value lost.

One of the arguments for irradiation is the issue of ground meat contamination. The meat is contaminated because of unclean conditions in the processing. Let us have clean, inspected food plants and food/meat that has not had its nutritional qualities destroyed by radiation.

Sincerely,

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